



*News Release from Congressman*

# RAÚL R. LABRADOR

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
THURSDAY, MARCH 17, 2011

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## LABRADOR RECEIVES CHAIRMAN'S SUPPORT TO INVESTIGATE POSSIBLE BATFE MISSTEPS IN BORDER OPERATIONS

**BOISE**— Today Congressman Raúl R. Labrador thanked Oversight and Government Reform Chairman Darrell Issa (R-CA) for sending a letter to BATFE Interim Director Kenneth E. Melson demanding his agency provide details of two operations involving Mexico.

Labrador's office was contacted by several individuals in February regarding allegations of the BATFE intentionally providing military-grade firearms to members of Mexican Drug Cartels in programs called "Operation Fast and Furious" and "Project Gunrunner". The purported purpose of these operations was to track the weapons to high profile figures in the Mexican underworld and lead to arrests. After hearing from several constituents on the matter, he raised the issue with Chairman Issa.

Subsequently, Congressman Issa, Chairman of the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform wrote the previously mentioned letter to BATFE Interim Director Melson on March 16, 2011

Labrador, who is Vice-Chair of the Subcommittee on National Security, Homeland Defense and Foreign Operations, has said he will work within the committee to ensure that these allegations are fully investigated.

Congressman Labrador urged the public and his colleagues in Congress to proceed with caution with regard to allegations that the BATFE intentionally facilitated guns to Mexican drug cartels.

"These allegations against the Bureau of Alcohol Tobacco Firearms and Explosives (BATFE) are very serious," said Labrador. "I express my appreciation to Chairman Issa for his support in taking up this difficult issue. It is important that no person involved in this investigation jump to conclusions before the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform has a full opportunity to receive the requested information and if necessary to hold hearings on the matter."

Attached to this news release are links to the media reports on the issue and the March 16<sup>th</sup> letter from Issa to the BATFE.

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